

4. Governance

4.1 Executive or legislative authority for the governing body of the interoperability effort.

The State of Montana's Homeland Security Strategic Plan calls for the establishment of a Montana-wide interoperable communications public safety system. By Executive Order 12-04, Governor Martz established the Statewide Interoperability Executive Council (SIEC) which replaced the Montana Public Safety Communications Council for strategic level interoperability policy and coordination. In November 2004 Governor Martz also signed Executive Order 19-04 to adopt APCO Project P25 as a standard for Montana. In August 2005 the SIEC adopted a formal definition of interoperability and technical requirements.

On May 24, 2005 the Interoperability Montana Projects Directors (IMPD) Board was formed to establish and conduct interoperability programs at the operational level and was composed of Project Directors from the nine consortiums organized throughout the state.

Governor Schweitzer continued the SIEC by Executive Order 38-06¹ on September 7, 2006 with the appointment of 10 voting and 9 ex officio members. See Appendix G for current membership. The Interoperability Montana Project Directors (IMPD), under authority of the SIEC, is continuing as the operational entity moving forward with planning and implementation of interoperable communications in Montana.

The Senior Advisory Committee (SAC) provides input to the State Administrative Agency (SAA) on Department of Homeland Security (DHS) grants and recommends priorities for funding. The SAC, like the SIEC, works closely with the IMPD. These inter-relationships provide for a fully integrated implementation approach on technology, operations and funding. Multiple agencies and interest groups are represented on the SAC.

4.2 Governance structure that will oversee development and implementation of the plan.

Montana's interoperability governance structure consists of eight regional consortia and one mobile data consortium made up of representatives from Montana's 56 counties and 7 Indian Nations. A Memorandum of Understanding was signed in November 2005 to form the Interoperability Montana Project (IM).

The nine consortia (I-15-90 Corridor, Big Sky 11, Central Montana, Eastern Tier, Northern Tier, South Central Montana, Tri-County and the Western Interoperability Consortium. Mobile Data Terminal), now with 3 State of Montana agencies (Highway Patrol, Department of Transportation, Department of Natural Resources and Conservation) are addressing public safety communications needs for planning and infrastructure development. Joining the IM Project are multiple partners at the local, state, tribal and Federal level.

The IM Project is led by the Interoperable Montana Project Directors (IMPD), represented by each consortium that develops project goals, establishes priorities and implements the project

¹ Available online at http://governor.mt.gov/eo/EO-38_Statewide_Interoperability_Council.pdf.



based on those priorities. In November of 2006, three State of Montana agencies were added to the IMPD (Transportation, Highway Patrol and Natural Resources and Conservation).

To assist the IMPD, Northrop Grumman Corporation, through the Master Information Services (MIS) contract, provides Project Management services.

The Statewide Interoperability Executive Council (SIEC)

The SIEC is comprised of local, state, tribal, federal, and other public safety agency representatives. Its purpose is to provide policy-level direction for matters related to planning, designing and implementing guidelines, best practices, and standard approaches to solve Montana's public safety communications interoperability problems and to leverage any opportunity in support of a statewide system, including seeking federal funding, or other funding, for statewide interoperability. Sharing of a common radio infrastructure eliminates duplications of capital investment projects reducing total radio communications cost for each participating agency. To that end it shall:

- Establish a joint approach to wireless interoperability among public safety entities within Montana;
- Exercise authority for strategic decision-making with regard to Montana's public safety communications by:
 - Research and evaluate best practices;
 - Develop recommendations for statewide standards;
 - Foster coordination and cooperation among agencies;
 - Make recommendations to provide statewide assistance;
- Act as an information clearinghouse;
- Serve as a policy point of contact for local; regional, and national and international interoperability matters;
- Develop recommendations for legislation that may be required to further promote interoperability;
- Consider other policy issues related to solving Montana's public safety communications interoperability problems; and
- Explore opportunities for inter-agency and regional systems and develop methods for inter-agency cooperation.

Consortia and Project Directors

The IM Project is a partnership of local, state, tribal and Federal response agencies committed to improving and expanding interoperable communications throughout Montana. The partners are divided into three main categories: 1) Regional Consortia (representing local and tribal interests); 2) State of Montana Agencies (representing all levels of state radio users); 3) Federal and Private Partnerships. These partners have formed nine consortia to deploy the IM Project Montana. Consortium members have elected a project director to represent them on the Interoperability Montana Project Directors (IMPD).



The IMPD represents each consortium and serves as the operational governing board for the IM Project. The IMPD is a dynamic, cohesive group dedicated to the deployment of statewide interoperability for public safety responders. The IMPD provides project definition and oversight, and the directors wholly represent the local communications needs of their communities and work together to collaboratively build a share system designed to improve the safety of their residents and the responders who serve them. This grassroots partnership of local, state, tribal and federal government agencies is dedicated to a strategic deployment of Project 25, digital, secure voice and data communications across the state.

Each of these consortium have agreed to work together to advance the development of interoperable communications infrastructure according to the priorities and funding established by the IMPD. Communications needs not addressed by the IMPD may be developed by the consortia, or individual agencies, as their own priorities and funding allow.

Interoperability Montana Governance Committee (IMGC)

The IM Governance Committee (IMGC) works under the guidance and direction of the IM Project Directors and is charged with defining strategies and developing structures which addresses short and long term governance and maintenance solutions for the IM Project. The Governance Committee is developing a governance to implement a permanent organizational structure to establish authority for a statewide emergency communications system.

The governance structure is establishing a practitioner-driven structure that will ensure a place at the table for all relevant agencies and users. The IMGC is formalizing and ensuring equality in the decision-making (e.g. all members have an equal vote as defined by their level of participation). This structure provides the vehicle through which agencies, local responders and users which are participating in the Interoperability Montana Project plan for and implement an integrated governing organization.

The IMGC is made of representatives from the IMPD, Public Safety Services Bureau, the Governor's Office and other agencies.

Interoperability Montana Technical Committee (IMTC)

Due to the highly technical nature of radio interoperability communications, the IMTC was formed to make recommendations to the IMPD on technical issues related to the design, implementation and operation of the IM Project.

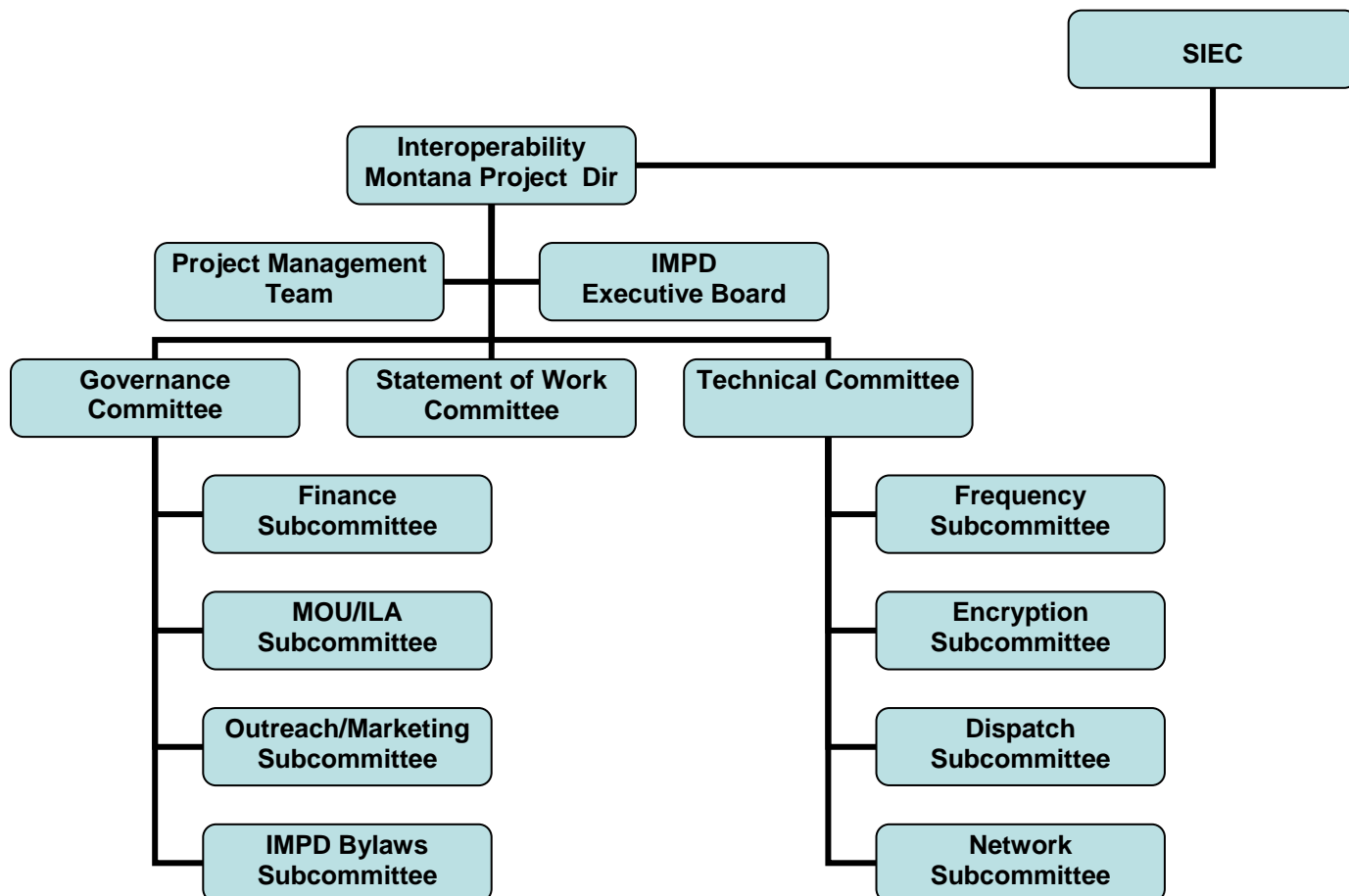
The IM Technical Committee also works under the guidance and direction of the IM Project Directors and is tasked with design and development of the IM system. The IM system is designed under guidelines provided by the Senior Advisory Committee (SAC) which are:

- All consortia see improvement
- Sites should fill in dead spots that will be located along backbone once completed
- Trunk sites should cover major transportation arteries or population centers
- Sites should have a significant impact on multiple consortia and/or multi-jurisdictions
- The IM should address projects that exceed scope and ability of local/tribal funding



The IMTC serves an important role in evaluating technology, determining technical specifications for equipment and sites, assessing communications sites, identifying frequencies, ensuring compliance with P25 standards, and addressing encryption and bandwidth issues. The IMTC formulated technical criteria that have been used to prepare a prioritized list of infrastructure projects, which the IMPD has adopted.

Figure 9: Governance Structure



4.3 Charter for the governing body, stating the principles, roles, responsibilities, and processes.

A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is entered into between local government consortia consisting of Big Sky 11 Interoperability Consortium, Central Montana Interoperability Communications Consortium, Eastern Tier Interoperability Consortium, I-15/90 Corridor Interoperability Communications Consortium, Northern Tier Interoperability Consortium, South Central Montana Interoperability Consortium, Tri-County/Southwestern Interoperability Consortium and Western Interoperability Communications Consortium (Consortia). The Mobile Data Terminal Consortium (“MDT”), and Montana state agencies consisting of Montana Department of Justice (DOJ), Montana Department of Natural Resources & Conservation (DNRC) and Montana Department of Transportation (MDoT) (“State Agencies”) for the purpose of creating Interoperability Montana, an association that will coordinate and establish policies and protocol for a state-wide interoperable communications system capable of providing

interoperable wireless voice and data exchange for the entire realm of public safety and emergency management.

Each Consortium has been formed through an interlocal agreement between its member counties and Indian Nations. The interlocal agreements establish the position of Project Director, who is the executive officer for the Consortium and is authorized to represent it as a member of the board for Interoperability Montana.

The Consortia desire to establish an association known as Interoperability Montana, which will have capability to coordinate and oversee a statewide reliable and effective interoperable communications system capable of providing interoperable wireless voice and data exchange for the entire realm of public safety and emergency management, including a response to terrorism, the threat of terrorism and all-hazards.

The Montana Department of Justice, Montana Department of Natural Resources & Conservation, Montana Department of Transportation and MDT each have an interest in the effective operation of Interoperability Montana and are willing to voluntarily participate. Each is desirous of having a representative on the board for Interoperability Montana.

The objective of Interoperability Montana is to establish standards and protocol for the acquisition and operation of public safety radio and wireless communication equipment. This standardization has a goal of creating an interoperability public safety radio communications system in Montana that is a standards-based shared system of systems and is a wide area system for use by public safety responders. This communications interoperability among public safety emergency responders will ensure their radio communication systems will work seamlessly with other systems or products without any special effort. This interoperability approach to communication systems allows public safety responders in Montana to exchange voice and data communications on demand, in real time, during emergencies and disasters.

The parties expect that the standards set by Interoperability Montana will provide advanced channel management for the shared use of frequencies. Seamless roaming throughout the respective trunked areas (footprint), and enhanced responder safety through embedded signaling, while at the same time enhancing interoperable communications with existing legacy VHF radios. For lower levels of interoperability, current mutual aid channels will be maintained and available for use.

Organization of Interoperability Montana

The parties agree to form Interoperability Montana, an association of the parties as its members, which will be controlled by a Board of Directors as set forth herein.

Membership: The Board consists of the Project Manager from each of the eight Consortia, a designated representative from each of the three State Agencies and one from MDT. Any party may designate in writing an alternate representative who may fulfill the duties of the representative in the absence of the same as defined in the By-Laws Article 3: Membership, Section 3.1.

Terms of Representatives and Alternates: An appointed representative or alternate will serve for the term designated by their individual consortium as defined in the Interoperability Montana By-Laws, Article 3: Membership, Sections 3.1 and 3.2.



Duties and Authority of Board: To participate in Interoperability Montana and work toward achievement of its vision, mission and goals, the Board shall:

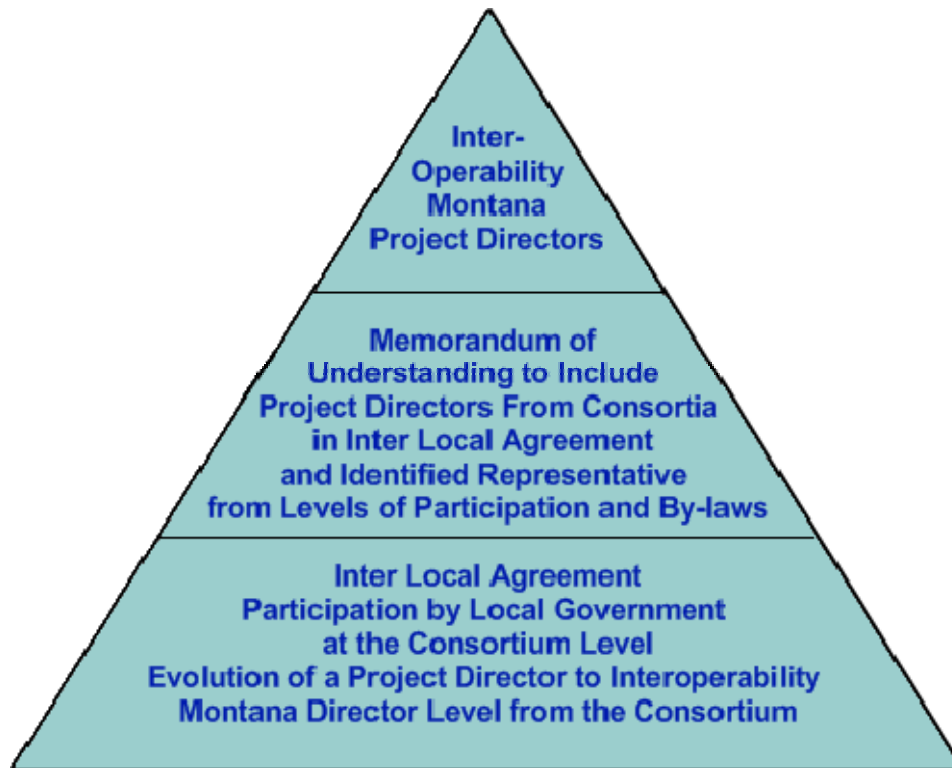
1. Select from its members a Chair, Vice Chair and Secretary Second Vice Chair;
2. Adopt by-laws to govern its internal affairs;
3. Meet at least six (6) times a year or at the call of the Chair or a majority of the Directors using face to face meetings, voice conferencing or video conferencing;
4. Conduct meetings and records of meetings in conformance with Title 2, Chapters 3 and 6, MCA;
5. Arrange for Interoperability Montana, a state agency or a local jurisdiction to hold, secure, and maintain the records of the Board and to provide for administrative and financial support for the Board as it may need;
6. Enter into an agreement or memorandum of understanding with funding sources including, but not limited to, Department of Homeland Security and the Public Safety Interoperability Communications (PSIC) grants to:
 - prioritize interoperability requirements and request government funding;
 - assess regional priority communications interoperability requirements; and
 - make recommendations on the feasibility of methods to develop or implement Montana-wide communications interoperability and local or regional projects; and
7. Establish standards and protocol for the acquisition, maintenance and operation of public safety radio and wireless communications equipment and for seamless roaming throughout the State of Montana and enhanced responder safety through embedded signaling;
8. Assist all Consortia in applying for funding for communication equipment, facilities and technical assistance for interoperability compliance;
9. Provide advanced channel management for the shared use of frequencies licensed during the Interoperability Montana project for trunking and non-trunked systems.
10. Prepare a budget for recommended disbursement of funds authorized through private and public grants and legislative appropriations to members of the Consortia, State Agencies or MDT to create, equip, operate and maintain the state-wide interoperability public safety radio communication system; and
11. Do all things necessary and within the legal authority of the Board to create, equip, operate and maintain a state-wide interoperability communications system.
12. Hire or contract for hire an executive officer and staff to support Interoperability Montana's vision, mission and goals.

Please see Appendix H for a copy of the Memorandum of Understanding between the consortia.

Please see Interoperability Montana Project Directors By-Laws Appendix I for a copy Interoperability Montana Project Directors By-Laws.



Figure 10: Governance Authority Structure



4.4 Members of the governing body and any of its committees.

Interoperability Montana Project Directors (IMPD)

The Interoperability Montana Project Directors (IMPD) is the operational governing board for the Interoperability Montana (IM) Project.

The IMPD is chaired by Sheriff Cheryl Liedle of Lewis and Clark County. Three members of the the IMPD make up the Executive Board who are authorized to make decisions and take action in between IMPD monthly meetings. The Project Management Team is currently filled by Northrop Grumman Corporation. The links below will take you to web sites for all the IM Project Consortia sites.

Please see Appendix J for the membership of the IMPD and its subcommittees.

IM Governance Committee

The Interoperability Montana Governance Committee (IMGC) was formed in August, 2006 to address short- and long-term best practices and governance needs. This committee is recommending legal, policy and administrative structures for the Interoperability Montana (IM) Project. A goal of the IMGC is to create a vehicle by which agencies, stakeholders and users participating in the IM Project can plan for an integrated system of management and implementation. Additionally, the committee wants to ensure a place at the table for relevant agencies and users that formalizes and strives for equality in decision making.

The committee embraces a locally-led governance approach that is dynamic and flexible, yet able to operate with formalized rules and procedures. The approach will emphasize cost effectiveness with balanced participation and funding streams.

Committee members want to ensure that the process maintains a grassroots approach while moving successfully towards a completed system that is adequately funded and provides solid training, operating procedures, business practices and resources to its users.

This professional group consists of representatives from each consortium and meets monthly prior to the Interoperability Montana Project Directors (IMPD) meetings. The committee is chaired by William Fleiner, State of Montana Department of Corrections.

Please see Appendix K for the membership of the IMGC.

IM Finance Sub-Committee

The IM Finance Sub-Committee was appointed in February 2007. This group is investigating continuous funding mechanisms for on-going maintenance, operations and expansion of the IM Project. This sub-committee has identified goals, potential revenue sources, and is in the process of developing a comprehensive two-year budget for the project that will cover administration, capital investments and improvements, maintenance and operations, radio repair and replacement, technological advances and training and exercises.

IM MOU/ILA Sub-Committee

This sub-committee has worked to draw up the Interlocal Agreement template and answer questions from county commissioners and tribal leaders about the document and its purpose. The sub-committee also has developed the formal Memorandum of Understanding agreement that will unite all the IM consortia and state agencies to establish the legal entity of the IMPD.

IM Outreach/Marketing Sub-Committee

The IM Outreach/Marketing Sub-committee has undertaken five major efforts this year to enhance the public's understanding of the IM Project. The sub-committee developed a "white paper" about the IM Project that was distributed to legislators. It worked with Northrop-Grumman to hold a legislative reception for legislators during the 2007 legislative session. PSSB Bureau Chief Chris Christensen and Montana State University Local Government Center's Director and Associate Director have participated in workshop with the Montana Association of counties (MACo) and the Montana League of cities and Towns (MLCT). A radio communications demonstration was coordinated with the Governor's office during the legislative session to display the capabilities of the Lewis and Clark County radio system. Finally, the sub-committee worked with the MSU Local Government Center to dedicate an entire issue of the Montana Policy Review publication to the subject of interoperability.

IM Bylaws Sub-Committee

The IM by-laws Sub-Committee is charged with suggesting changes and obtaining IMPD approval for any changes to the IMPD bylaws.



IM Technical Committee

The Interoperability Montana Technical Committee (IMTC) was formed to make recommendations to the Interoperability Montana Project Directors (IMPD) on technical issues related to the design, implementation and operation of the IM Project.

The IMTC evaluates technology, determines technical specifications for equipment and sites, assesses communications sites, identifies frequencies, ensures compliance with P25 standards, and addresses encryption and bandwidth issues. The IMTC formulated technical criteria that have been used to prepare a prioritized list of infrastructure projects, which the IMPD has adopted.

This expert group consists of representatives from each consortium and meets weekly via telephone and conducts monthly face-to-face meetings. The committee is chaired by Don Brostrom, Hill County Undersheriff. Four sub-committees report to the IMTC, which are described below. Please see Appendix L for the membership of the IMTC.

IM Frequency Sub-Committee

The Frequency Sub-Committee defines the approach and management of frequency resources necessary for interoperable communications in the State of Montana. It wrote a Frequency Plan that was adopted by the IMPD in August, 2007 and will be continually monitoring and upgrading it.

IM Encryption Sub-Committee

The Encryption Sub-Committee is in charge of developing a plan for encryption of radios throughout the state. It is in the process of educating key decision-makers about the encryption plan.

IM Dispatch Sub-Committee

The Dispatch Sub-Committee held its first meeting in October, 2007 to begin assessing needs for dispatch connectivity to the IM Project.

IM Network Sub-Committee

The Network Sub-Committee has developed the statewide network plan and implementation. This monumental task has involved performing site walks, attending consortia meetings to plan trunk and microwave sites meetings with the Montana National Guard and the U.S. Air Force to ensure that their microwave requirements are met and verifying microwave paths throughout the state. The IMPD adopted the statewide Network Design Plan on Sept., 2007.

IM Statement of Work Committee

The Interoperability Montana Statement of Work (SOW) Committee is determining all the requirements for project in management to the IM Project and the criteria by which potential contractors will be evaluated.



4.5 Meeting schedule for the governing body.

The Statewide Interoperability Executive Council (SIEC) meets on a quarterly basis

The Interoperability Montana Projects Directors (IMPD) meets regularly on the first Tuesday of the month.

The Interoperability Montana Governance Committee (IMGC) and Finance subcommittee of the IMPD meets regularly on the first Monday of the month.

The Interoperability Technical Committee (IMTC) representatives from each consortium and meets bi-monthly via telephone and conducts monthly face-to-face meetings.

Individual consortiums meet on a monthly schedule

Please see Appendix M for hyperlinks to meeting schedules.

4.6 Multi-jurisdictional, multi-disciplinary agreements for decision-making and for sharing resources.

An Interlocal Government Agreement has been entered into by the counties and tribes to establish each regional Interoperability Consortium. The identified nine consortia across the state of Montana will communicate and plan with response entities and government officials for overall interoperable communications within the counties and reservations within their regions. The Consortia agree to form governing boards and establish the position of Project Director, whose duties and responsibilities are set within the Consortia Interlocal Agreements.

A Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) currently exists between the Montana-wide Communications Interoperability Consortium Project Directors for the purpose of setting forth an agreed upon framework to conduct business practices to implement the Montana-wide communications interoperability plan. A revised Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is currently being reviewed by the IMPD and plans are for it to be signed in December. This MOU will unite the consortia and three state agencies to form the IMPD as a legal entity.

The Governor of Montana approved the State's Homeland Strategic Plan. The plan requires the establishment of a Montana-wide, interoperable communications public safety system. The system objective is to seamlessly link voice and data systems used by Federal, tribal, state, local and private sector public safety responders. The Governor established the Statewide Interoperability Executive Council (SIEC) to provide policy level interoperability directions and coordination under the chair of the Department of Administration.

Previous Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) established the organization of eight regional Consortia and a Mobile Data Terminal group. The Consortium's MOU authorizes assessment and establishment of regional voice and data assets to achieve Montana-wide communications as defined by the SIEC. Each Consortium elects a Project Director to implement regional objectives.



This MOA provides the basis for these nine Project Directors to make decisions to provide for phased implementation of a Montana-wide Communications Interoperability Network.

A Memorandum of Understanding between the Department of the Interior (DOI) and the State of Montana was entered into on October, 2006 for the use of statewide trunking communications systems. The State of Montana has agreed to allow the DOI to use the State's Interoperability Montana system at no cost to the DOI and its agencies. In return the DOI has agreed to let the State of Montana integrate some DOI/National Telecommunications Information Administration (NTIA) assigned frequencies within its system.

Please see Appendix H for copies of and hyperlinks to the Consortia Interlocal Government Agreements, the Memorandum of Understanding with the United States Department of the Interior, and the Memorandum of Understanding with the United States Department of Military Affairs.

Figure 11: Interoperability Montana: A Different Approach

